

an earmark, was in my district. It says that the States of Mississippi and Arkansas can pay for the health care that their people receive at the Charity Hospital in the City of Memphis, Tennessee that is losing \$20 million a year and more treating people from Mississippi and Arkansas who are indigent.

That is not an earmark. That is allowing a State the option to pay for care received by their citizens that they otherwise wouldn't receive and that another county taxpayer group or city people are paying for. It is equity. It is long due. It wasn't an earmark. And I hope my colleagues will refrain from continuing to refer to this in such a way. It is a calumny that shouldn't be repeated on this House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I thank this House for passing that conference committee report and correcting an inequity in health care.

CIRCULAR FUNDRAISING

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, among the many downsides of earmarking and one that we rarely talk about on the House floor is the practice of circular fundraising. Campaign donations are given to Members, Members secure earmarks benefiting their contributors, and contributors in turn are able to give Members more donations. This cycle is repeated over and over and over.

Unfortunately, this is a bipartisan practice. The media has reported on many such arrangements for Members on both sides of the aisle. Legal issues aside, circular fundraising does not pass the smell test.

Whether it is fair or not, the crimes of a few of our former colleagues have cast suspicion over us all. Continued rampant fundraising is simply not worth the trust it costs us with our constituents. I think that most of us had higher aspirations when we came here than groveling for crumbs that fall from the appropriators' table. I hope that we as Members of Congress will finally decide that enough is enough.

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS

(Ms. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Congress has a strong record of delivering our promises, real meaningful change, fiscally responsible ways, and instituting a pay-as-you-go policy and doing it in a deficit reduction, disciplined way.

Our Democratic Congress, the majority that we have, has passed three significant things:

Number one, we passed legislation last month that instituted the 9/11 Commission recommendations that would improve communications with first responders and would ensure 100

percent screening of airline and sea-borne cargo.

Number two, we established historic energy independence that would reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil.

And, number three, this Democratic House, we have made sure to invest in over 3,000 new Border Patrol agents as well as 50,000 new police officers.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of how our Democratic Congress majority has taken America in a new direction.

GIVE ILLEGALS A PACKAGE

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, two delivery services, UPS and FedEx, take a package and deliver it for a customer anywhere in a world in just a handful of days. Amazingly, a customer can even track one of those 23 million packages on the Internet and know exactly where it is on any given day. Maybe the Federal Government could learn something here.

The Federal Government doesn't seem to even know where 20 million illegals are in this country, much less track their whereabouts. A good example of how private industry works and the Federal Government does not.

Anyway, it has been suggested that the way to solve the case of the missing illegals is to give every illegal that crosses into the United States a FedEx or UPS package. The package could contain items for their stay illegally in the United States. Then we could record when people enter the U.S. and know where they are at any given time.

Mr. Speaker, it is a disgrace that the Federal Government can't handle border security any better than it does. The Feds owe it to the American citizens to come up with ways to stop the flow of illegals into the United States.

And that's just the way it is.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS ARE MEETING AMERICA'S PRIORITIES IN A FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MANNER

(Mr. HARE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, the new Democratic Congress is taking our Nation in a new direction by putting the needs of the American people first and making long delayed investments in our future.

Over the summer, the House passed every single one of its appropriations bills for the upcoming year. Our appropriation priorities will better protect the Nation against terrorism by including 3,500 more firefighting grants and better protect our neighborhoods against violent crime by investing in 12,000 new police officers.

We also invest in community health centers so that they can provide essential health care services to more than 1

million additional Americans. We beefed up cancer and other lifesaving medical research so that we can continue to look for cures for these devastating diseases.

And we make the largest investment in veterans health care funding in the history of the Veterans Administration, ensuring that our veterans get the health care they are entitled to.

Mr. Speaker, we once again invest in priorities that were neglected by the old Republican Congress, and we do it in a fiscally responsible way following pay-as-you-go policies that will lead us to no new deficit spending.

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GREATER FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to promote the congressional duty to be good stewards of the American taxpayers' money. The American people deserve government that is transparent and open when spending money.

Republicans enjoyed a tremendous victory for American families earlier this year when we passed a smart earmark reform policy for spending bills. But we need to ensure that earmarks put in all legislation receive the same amount of scrutiny. That is why I call on Members of this Chamber to join over 160 of our colleagues in signing a discharge petition to force a vote on a resolution that will enforce an open and honest earmark policy on all legislation that comes before this body.

I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join us in standing up for the American taxpayer.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

(Mr. ALTMIRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, at long last, after months of debate, negotiation and compromise, the House and the Senate have come to agreement on a children's health reauthorization that's going to extend health care coverage to 10 million children in this country. And last night, I'm proud to be 1 of 265 Members of this House that supported that legislation and voted to send that bill to the President.

This is bipartisan legislation. We have agreement with both the House and the Senate, but unfortunately, the House does not have the votes to override the veto at this time.

I'm asking my Republican colleagues, please consider the 10 million children that are going to lose access to health care coverage if this bill is not passed, if the veto is not overridden. We must override this veto.

These are working families that play hard, that work hard and play by the rules, and we have to find a way to ensure their children.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY HYPOCRISY

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Columbia University defended the Iranian President's speech by invoking the right to free speech and speaking about open exchange of ideas.

None of what he said on Monday could be construed as such. He dodged questions about his Holocaust denial. He ignored questions about his country's role in the death of American soldiers in Iraq.

This same university does not allow our military's ROTC program on campus because they believe the military's "don't ask, don't tell policy" is discriminatory toward homosexuals.

But if Columbia is that concerned about defending homosexuals, why did they let this dictator on campus? His regime doesn't discriminate against gays; it executes them. More than 400 homosexuals so far executed like this.

Columbia University provided Mr. Ahmadinejad a sense of legitimacy and a forum that he will no doubt use to his advantage at home and abroad.

It is unfortunate they don't provide the same to the fine young men and women of our armed services.

HOUSE RULES ON TAX RATE INCREASES

(Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to serve as chairman of the Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee. That subcommittee reviews tax legislation that has been referred to the Ways and Means Committee. We take this responsibility most seriously. Raising or lowering the tax burden on families and businesses has a real impact, both on those individuals and on the economy.

I was concerned when I heard debate last week suggesting that the House had changed our procedural rules for considering tax increases. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) mistakenly stated that the House rules no longer require a supermajority for tax rate increases.

The House rules on this subject are exactly the same as they were under the last Congress. The rule was written by the Republican majority back in 1997 and has remained unchanged.

I simply wanted to ensure that the record was entirely clear on this subject.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY SPECIALIST CHRISTIAN M. NEFF

(Mr. JORDAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a brave young soldier and one of America's fallen heroes, Army Specialist Christian M. Neff.

Chris attended middle and high school in the Shawnee District before graduating from the Apollo Career Center in Lima, Ohio. He's remembered by many as a quiet man, but one with the ability to make people smile; someone who earned people's respect and led by example.

Christian Neff died on Wednesday, September 19 in Iraq while serving America in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Age 19, he is survived by a loving family and friends in Allen County and beyond.

In reading of Christian's life and speaking with his mother, I was touched by the dramatic impact he had on the lives of so many.

A young man of deep faith, Chris stood up and volunteered to serve his country. He fought to promote freedom. He gave his life in defense of his family, his community, his State and his Nation. For this, each and every American owes him and his family a great debt of gratitude.

Christian will be deeply missed. But the strength of his character and the courage he demonstrated through his service will live on.

WELCOMING THE STUDENTS FROM CHRIST THE KING SCHOOL IN TOLEDO, OHIO

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleague, Mr. JORDAN, in extending deepest sympathy to the family of Specialist Neff, and thank him for his valorous service to our Nation.

At the same time, today I would like to welcome to our Chamber and ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming the students from Christ the King School in Toledo, Ohio, 57 strong, who are here today, the future leaders of our country. We have sitting there future teachers, future astronauts, future Members of this House, future doctors, future military leaders, future librarians, future priests, future leaders in every sector. I'm just so pleased that they were able to visit our Nation's Capitol today. To see their enthusiasm and to know that America will be placed in their hands in a very short while gives me great hope for this 21st century. I know they will lead America to years of greater progress, greater opportunity and greater waves of peace for the people of our Nation and the people of the world. I'm so happy that they could visit today.

DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY SAYS "NOT GUILTY"

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, with O.J. Simpson back in the news, House leadership has decided to take one of his famous lines and use it to escape responsibility for a multitude of massive, budget-busting spending bills that they are trying to pass.

Raising taxes nationwide by \$400 billion, including an on-average \$3,000 per tax increase per American citizen? The Democrat majority says, "not guilty."

Withholding the passage of veterans health care bills for political purposes? The majority again says, "not guilty."

Granting illegal immigrants health care benefits and taking Medicare Advantage benefits away from our seniors and putting them in waiting lines for wheelchairs? The House leadership pleads "not guilty."

Well, sorry majority party. The American people are tired of your wasteful spending, and they will not acquit. This Congress needs to instill fiscal discipline and balance the budget so our families can build a better, brighter future.

DRIVER'S LICENSES FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

(Mr. KUHLMAN of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUHLMAN of New York. Mr. Speaker, on Friday of this past week, New York's Governor, Eliot Spitzer, announced his immigration policy, which allows immigrants, including those entering the country illegally, to obtain driver's licenses. This decision solidifies the need for more aggressive immigration legislation in these United States.

Why are we rewarding the people who are coming here illegally at the expense of others who are law-abiding citizens?

Inviting potential terrorists into the State and allowing them to drive whenever they wish undermines the preventive measures that protect our country from national security threats.

Let's not forget that September 11, 2001, hijackers had at least 35 licenses which helped them to rent cars and open bank accounts.

In addition, it will wreak havoc on our social services programs and create a massive flooding of illegal immigrants to New York State, straining our resources in our schools and our hospitals.

We need real immigration legislation that strengthens our borders and does not diminish our national security by granting more privileges to those who have entered this country illegally.